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Forest Service NEWS



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V-34
9-24-85

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JOE MEADE NAMED USDA HANDICAPPED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

A USDA Forest Service employee who works in Prineville, Oregon, has been named Handicapped Employee of the Year by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Joe Meade, public affairs officer for the Ochoco National Forest, will travel to Washington, D.C., to attend the awards ceremony scheduled for October 7 at 10 a.m., EDT, at the Department of Agriculture Administration Building. Secretary of Agriculture John Block or one of his Deputies will make the presentation. Forest Service Associate Chief F. Dale Robertson will accompany Meade during the ceremony.

Meade's wife Linda, their two children (Cami, 7, and Jory, 6), and his guide dog Missy will accompany him to Washington, D.C. While there, Meade will take part in activities to commemorate National Employ the Handicapped Week, October 6-12. He is also scheduled to demonstrate a computer with voice synthesizer he now uses in his work.

Meade has been blind since he was injured in an off-road vehicle accident in 1976 at the age of 17. He has worked for the Forest Service since 1977, beginning his career on the Deschutes National Forest in Bend, Oregon, where he worked at Lava Lands Visitor Center and in the supervisor's office. During the summer, he greeted visitors, conducted guided walks, and provided information on the geology, wildlife, botany, and recreation opportunities in the area. During the winter, he worked with news media and prepared environmental education programs. In 1984, he was promoted to his present position in Prineville. He now serves as a Fire Information Officer during major forest fires in addition to the total information program for the Ochoco National Forest.

Meade has held various human rights and equal employment committee assignments for the Forest Service. In 1978, he was named Outstanding Blind Worker of the Year by the Oregon Commission for the Blind. In 1982, he was appointed by Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh to serve on the State Commission for the Blind. He is presently serving his second two-year term. He has received several certificates of appreciation from civic groups and organizations and letters of recognition from the Chief of the Forest Service.

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